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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/832,666	04/11/2001	Tomoaki Aihara	P/1878-169	1818

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, JIMMY

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2829

DATE MAILED: 08/28/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

9/1

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/832,666	AIHARA, TOMOAKI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jimmy Nguyen	2829	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 April 2001.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1 - 29 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1 - 29 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) <u>3</u> .	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The specification is objected to because on page 16, line 11, probe card 12 should be probe card 13. Correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in-
(1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effect under this subsection of a national application published under section 122(b) only if the international application designating the United States was published under Article 21(2)(a) of such treaty in the English language; or
(2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that a patent shall not be deemed filed in the United States for the purposes of this subsection based on the filing of an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a).

3. Claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 13 – 16, , 19, 21 – 23, 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Eldridge et al (US 6339338).

As to claims 1, 7, 14, 21, Eldridge et al disclose in Fig 1 an inspection method and apparatus for simultaneously inspecting a plurality of semiconductor devices (14) each having a terminal (19, 26) for an input signal, comprising the steps of.

Preparing a driver (outputting from 24) for outputting a signal to be used for inspection;

Connecting an output terminal of driver (outputting from 24) to a branching point

Connecting each of terminals (19) of the semiconductor devices (14) and the branching point (as seen in the figure branch out) through a current limiting element (R1) and a capacitor (C1) connected in parallel to current limiting element (R1); and

Outputting a signal (+ Va) from driver toward branching point.

As to claims 2, 8, 16, 19, 23, 26, Eldridge et al (fig 1) disclose the inspection method further comprise wherein a resistor (R1) is used as current limiting element.

As to claim 13, Eldridge et al (fig 1) disclose the external clock (CLOCK) is supplied to the second terminals through the second driver

As to claims 15, 22, Eldridge et al (fig 1) disclose the current limiting elements (R1) and the capacitors (C1) are provided in a probe card (12) or a test board for connecting semiconductor device (14) to be inspected to a tester (10).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 3 - 6, 9 – 12, 17, 18, 20, 24, 25, 27 – 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eldridge et al (US 6339338).

As to claims 3 - 6, 9 – 12, 17, 18, 20, 24, 25, 27 – 29, Eldridge et al (fig 1)
discloses the claimed invention except for the value of resistor and capacitor. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use appropriate values for resistors, capacitors, and frequency given the device application since it has been held that discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art. In re Boesch, 617 F.2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jimmy Nguyen at (703) 306-5858. Any inquiry of a general nature of relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-4900.

JN.
August 22, 2002



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Sherry". Below the signature, the date "8/26/02" is written in a cursive style.

MICHAEL SHERRY
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800